DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 458 547 CS 014 513

AUTHOR	Ediger, Marlow
TITLE	Vocabulary Development in the Reading Curriculum.
PUB DATE	2001-11-00
NOTE	8p.
PUB TYPE	Opinion Papers (120)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Interdisciplinary Approach; *Reading Instruction; *Reading Strategies; Student Needs; Teacher Role; *Vocabulary Development; *Vocabulary Skills
IDENTIFIERS	Learning Environment

ABSTRACT

To do well in reading, students need to have a well-developed vocabulary on their own developmental level. The vocabulary a student possesses provides background information so that meaningful reading of new content can occur. A language-rich learning environment is necessary for students to thrive in the listening, speaking, reading, and writing vocabularies. For vocabulary growth to take place, the teacher needs to establish definite objectives in terms of knowledge categories, skills, and attitudinal ends to be achieved by students. This paper discusses the following reading strategies and tools in vocabulary development: sustained silent reading, individualized reading, basal readers, the "big book," and the dictionary. The paper also discusses vocabulary development across the curriculum. It concludes that an interdisciplinary vocabulary curriculum need to be planned so that with each academic area students can experience challenges in vocabulary growth. (NKA)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 458 547

Vocabulary Development in the Reading Curriculum.

by Marlow Ediger

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

M. Ediger

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

CS 014 513

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT IN THE READING CURRICULUM

To do well in reading, students need to have a well developed vocabulary on their own developmental level. Vocabulary achievement needs to be optimal so that the learner may process information appropriately when reading subject matter. The vocabulary possessed provides background information for students so that meaningful reading of new content might occur. What is being read then will sound increasingly familiar as the student's vocabulary has realized a more optimal level of achievement. Having a rich speaking and listening vocabulary assists the student to make use of these learnings in ensuing reading endeavors. In addition to the speaking and listening vocabularies, the student needs to achieve well in reading and its corollary which is writing. A language rich learning environment is necessary in order for students to thrive in the listening, speaking, reading, and writing vocabularies. Thus, a reading center needs to be in the offing in which there are library books on a variety of genres and on diverse reading levels. A nearby center needs to be available for students to discuss library books being read. A writing center needs to be situated with paper/pencils whereby students may engage in written work pertaining to what was read. A neatly illustrated bulletin board display nearby should encourage students to participate in the language rich environment stressing listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In this way students may develop and enrich vocabulary development!

Sustained Silent Reading and Vocabulary Development

Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) needs to be encouraged in the school and classroom setting. Here, adults and students have time to read on their very own. Each chooses what to read. Adults are a model for students to emulate. Fifteen to twenty minutes in time duration helps each person to read personally interesting materials. There is no grading of students nor tests given to measure achievement! Reading is to be done for enjoyment and pleasure. With everyone reading silently to themselves, a language rich environment is encouraged. In these situations, students will meet up with new vocabulary terms in print. These terms may be used as building blocks in assisting students to read increasingly more complex materials. SSR is an informal reading activity in which there are no

standards except that each person reads (Ediger and Rao, 2000, Chapter Four)).

Individualized Reading and Vocabulary Development

Individualized reading emphasizes the importance of each student choosing a library book to read. The classroom library here needs to have reading materials on different topics as well as on appropriate developmental levels for students. Students individually may then select a library book to read of personal interest and appropriate reading level. The student is the chooser of what to read sequentially. The entire reading curriculum may stress an individualized procedure. After, the student has completed reading a library book, he/she has a conference with the teacher. In the conference, students may discuss newly encountered words and their meanings. They need to reveal comprehension of content read as well as fluent reading when the student reads aloud a specific selection.

This is a holistic approach in reading instruction. Very little emphasis is placed upon word analysis. Holism as a philosophy of reading instruction stresses the importance of students reading for meaning within the framework of comprehending content in the entire library book, not isolated parts interspersed with phonics instruction. Vocabulary development is sequential and should help in attaching meaning to other library books read. The student in individualized reading may keep a notebook of new vocabulary terms and their meaning(s) encountered. From the dated conference, the teacher needs to record vital information on the student's progress. Comparisons may be made of student achievement of present with later conferences (Ediger and Rao, 2001, Chapter Six).

Basal Readers and Vocabulary Development

The manual section of the basal reader lists the new words students will encounter in reading the ensuing selection or story. The teacher may print these words neatly on the chalkboard and go over the contextual meaning of each as they will appear in the story. Adequate time needs to be given to having students identify each word and notice phonics elements as well as selected morphemes or syllables. Vocabulary development to be taught will include the new words as well as meanings of common prefixes such as "un," "ir," and "ex," among others. Suffixes may also be pinpointed in assisting students to identify new words as well as establish the meaning

thereof (See Gunning, 2000).

Journal writing may be emphasized in which students reflect upon whole words as well as morphemes and their meanings. Impressions of sequential stories read from the basal might be recorded in the journal by using the newly acquired vocabulary terms.

The Big Book and Vocabulary Development

Big Book philosophy stresses holism in its use in teaching reading to young children. As the name implies, the size of the book is large enough for all to see the printed words and illustrations as teaching and learning accrue. The teacher introduces the new story for children by having them look at and study the illustrations directly in front of them from the Big Book. The teacher then reads aloud a specific amount of content as students observe the printed words. He/she points to each new word as it is being read orally. Next, students read orally along with the teacher. Rereading may occur as often as desired. Students then may master vocabulary terms in contextual reading. Many vocabulary terms may be understood through the hearing of and use of context clues. The teacher may also explain these vocabulary terms with the use of the Big Book's illustrations prior to oral reading of the story. Additional comments pertaining to the new terms may follow the oral reading activities (See Holdaway, 1979).

The Dictionary and Vocabulary Development

A major problem in dictionary use in guiding student achievement in vocabulary development is the many skills needed to use this approach effectively. Some of the problems are the following:

1. the student's attention is taken away from reading ideas to the use of the dictionary in looking up the meaning(s) of unknown vocabulary terms.
2. the student needs to know and be able to use the alphabet effectively, as well as determine the correct meaning, from among several, as it would relate to the context of what is being read.
3. the student's maturity level in reading limits who can use the dictionary to ascertain word meaning. It is highly important that dictionaries be available which harmonize with the developmental reading level of the learner.
4. the student needs to feel motivated to use the dictionary

as the need arises rather than skip over word meanings.

5. the student may use context clues to determine word meanings. If the unknown word can not be ascertained in meaning within the sentence being read, the student may understand its meaning by reading additional, sequential sentences. With the heavy use of context clues, the student may glean ideas more readily as compared to the insertion of dictionary use. Students do need to become skillful in using context clues since a word may be defined in the contextual situation being read. Landau (1984) wrote

The skills required to use a dictionary are often taken for granted by adults; teachers, however, know very well that they must be taught and are not readily mastered by everyone. One's grasp of the alphabet must be secure, and more, one must grasp conceptually the sequential way in which alphabetizing is done. Even if the child can perform the operation of finding the word he seeks, if it is a great chore filled with false starts, he is likely to give up the battle.

Vocabulary Development Across the Curriculum

There are stories and library books read by students which relate directly to all curriculum areas be it diverse genres in literature, history and the social sciences, science, mathematics, health, music, and art. Here, students may learn new meanings for those words already known. Word can have multiple meanings. Clarification and classification of known words also adds meaning to vocabulary terms. Discussions on vocabulary terms in the classroom might well help students to enrich their vocabularies. The discussions may involve talking over personal experiences which may be used to make for clarity in vocabulary. Too often, these personal experiences are omitted by the learner when thinking about and attaching meaning to new terms. Sometimes, the meaning to be attached requires labeling and at other times concept development. Thus, certain things may be labeled such as fossils and at other times, indepth understanding of the concept is necessary, including the formation of fossils. If at all possible, the student should relate background experiences possessed to the new vocabulary terms being emphasized in reading. Thus the student needs to think about what he/she knows which would relate to the new term being stressed. Vocabulary development should not emphasize isolated meanings, but rather the interconnectedness of word meanings. Understanding synonyms and antonyms aids students to perceive word

relationships.

The teacher needs to think of and implement a plethora of approaches in guiding student vocabulary development. A variety of activities are then needed including the following:

1. reading aloud to students in an enthusiastic manner, especially to younger children. Carefully chosen content may indeed stimulate learners to listen carefully to the ideas therein including vocabulary. Listening to the story content being read assists students to review, add to, develop indepth, as well as understand multiple meanings of words.

2. helping develop an interest in vocabulary. An interesting bulletin board display may stimulate learning. Selected new words from reading across the curriculum may show the new word as well a related illustration. The teacher may determine which new words should appear on the bulletin board or student/teacher planning might be utilized. The goal of the bulletin board contents is to stimulate learner interest in vocabulary development.

3. assisting students to achieve in vocabulary development. Students may be assisted in a plethora of ways. Thus, the teacher may explain new words and their meanings to learners. Generally, a deductive procedure is used here. The explanations then move from the teacher to the student. In these explanations, concrete materials (objects and items when available), semi-concrete items (pictures, illustrations, and drawings), as well as abstract words including synonyms, antonyms, and sentences. Practice needs to be provided in helping students substitute a meaningful word or words for an unknown met in print.

4. guiding students to pantomime relevant words whereby others provide educated guesses as to their meaning(s).

5. peers assisting each other in establishing meanings for new words in print.

6. having learners show word meanings through different ways such as in a drawing, in an object constructed, in a lyric, in a poem, in a dramatization, in a rhythmic activity, among other intelligences (See Gardner, 1993).

7. helping students develop a vocabulary journal. Here, students individually keep record of what was learned in vocabulary terms across the curriculum. These terms may also be listed on a daily basis such as in diary entry form. Each entry is dated.

8. emphasizing a "one new word a day" learning experience. Here, students individually choose a new word each day to understand and use in every day language. A few minutes

may be taken to indicate which word was selected by a student and when/how it was used in oral or written communication.

9. developing a wall chart showing new words encountered and their meanings. Students may refer to the wall chart as needed. Both student and teacher help to keep the wall chart updated by listing these words and their attached meanings.

10. closing the school day with a brief, stimulating set of questions for students to answer pertaining to new vocabulary terms encountered (Ediger and Rao, 2001, Chapter Fifteen).

In Closing

For vocabulary growth to take place, the teacher needs to establish definite objectives in terms of knowledge categories, skills, and attitudinal ends to be achieved by students. A variety of learning opportunities need to be in the offing so that the objectives my be achieved by students. Individual differences among students need adequate provision so all may achieve optimally in vocabulary development. A quality program of assessment and evaluation needs to be planned carefully to ascertain if the objectives are being achieved by students.

A interdisciplinary vocabulary curriculum needs to be planned. Within each academic area, students need to experience challenges in vocabulary growth.

References

Ediger, Marlow, and D. Bhaskara Rao (2000), Teaching Reading Successfully. New Delhi, India: Discovery Publishing House, Chapter Four.

Ediger, Marlow, and D. Bhaskara Rao (2001), "Reading in the Social Studies," Teaching Social Studies Successfully. New Delhi, India: Discovery Publishing House, Chapter Six.

Ediger, Marlow, and D. Bhaskara Rao (2001) "Reading in the Science Curriculum," Teaching Science Successfully. New Delhi, India: Discovery Publishing House, Chapter Fifteen.

Gardner, Howard (1993), Multiple Intelligences: Theory Into Practice. New York: Basic Books.

Gunning, Thomas G. (2000), Creating Literacy Instruction for All Children. Third Edition. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 387-392.

Holdaway, D, (1979), The Foundations of Literacy. New York: Ashton Scholastic.

Landau, S. I. (1984), Dictionaries: The Art and Craft of Lexicography. New York: Scribner, p.14.